AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

Entered as second-class matter, September 30, 1912, at the Post-office at Washington, D. C., under the act of August 24, 1912.

VOL. 4, NO. 43. WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 1915. WHOLE NO. 199.

The A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter contains a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

Financial Help Wanted

Local Unions and friends should help the Textile Workers, Glove Workers, and the Calumet victims.

CONGRESS PASSES IMMIGRATION BILL; IS NOW BEFORE PRESIDENT WILSON

Washington, Jan. 23.—The Burnett immigration bill, containing the illiteracy test, has passed both branches of Congress and is now before President Wilson, for signature.

The bill originally passed the House nearly a year ago—February 4, 1914—by a vote of 252 to 126. Since then it has been in Senate committee or in conference between the two legislative bodies because of amendments. At no time was the illiteracy test questioned, except in the Senate, early this month, when a motion to strike it out received but twelve votes.

On Friday of last week—January 15—the House, by a vote of 227 to 88, gave final approval to the bill. The day previous the Senate accepted the bill by a yea and nay vote. The House won its point to strike from the bill a section inserted by the Senate which would admit Belgians to our shores, regardless of all immigration laws.

With the passage of this bill closes one of the most fiercely contested battles of this Congress. Against the proposal was arrayed large corporations and steamship companies, together with every ally these powerful forces could muster.

In the House the bill was debated for five days. An analysis of the vote shows that from twenty-one states every vote cast was for the bill; thirteen states gave a majority for the bill; three states were evenly divided; seven gave a majority against the bill and only four voted solidly against the bill—Connecticut, New Mexico, Rhode Island and Utah—or ten votes.

In answer to the claim that the country as a whole is not favor unrestricted immigration, it is shown that the vote in favor of an illiteracy test was: Southern states, 78 to 6; southwestern states, 33 to 9; northwestern states and the coast, 36 to 14, the Pacific Coast alone being 17 to 1.

The struggle to insert some educational test on our immigration laws has been waged for eighteen years. May 20, 1896, the House of Representatives favored a test by a vote of 195 to 26. During these years there have been 19 votes for or against reading test. Three of these were votes taken in committee of the whole, and 16 were votes in regular session of either the House or Senate. There have been seven record votes in the House, the average being 192 to 73 for the test; the five record votes in the Senate show an average vote of 52 to 19.

The following legislatures have asked for restrictive legislation: Arkansas (House), California, Massachusetts (House), Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and Wyoming.

The A. F. of L. has repeatedly declared for a test. At the Toronto convention, in 1909, it was agreed: "The illiteracy test is the most practical means of restricting the immigration of undesirables, and at the same time conditions are favorable to the workers already here, whether native or foreign." This position has been sustained by the railway brotherhoods and the organized farmers of this country, who have repeatedly declared in their conventions for the test. That American standards may be maintained. In a recent issue of the National Field, official journal of the Farmers' National Union, a strong editorial in favor of an illiteracy test closed as follows:

"Time was when the generality of people could not read or write in any language. And in that time no shame attached to them, or any one else, except the despotisms which needed a population of ignorant slaves. Now, being able to read and write is a puffic about 'the honest, the industrious, saving despotic spirit is held up as a privilege and all the rest a disgrace to the moral type. Much they care for the real welfare of this type.

"What they want is plenty of cheap laborers. After trustifying the industries through special privilege legislation on one hand, and pauperized labor on the other hand, they are now turning to the blessed vision of 'trustifying' agriculture."

BLAMES "LANDLORDISM."

New York, Jan. 23.—The control of large corporations by the system of absentee landlordism was banned for the present industries, unreal by Samuel Untermyer, lawyer, in addressing the Interstate Industrial Relations commission. The witness stated that this could be remedied by the abolition of voting by proxy, giving labor representation on boards of directors and representation to minority stockholders. He stated that practically all the American railroads were passing into the control of banking houses in Wall street, and that the control of 100,000 miles of railroad through reorganizations and 60,000 more miles were soon to be added to "financial interests" through receiverships. One of these financial groups, which the witness said was that of Morgan associates, held potential control of the labor policy of practically all railroads.

Roger W. Babson agreed on the evils of "absentee landlordism," and pointed out that rich and receiverships seldom occur in a business built up by an owner who lives in a town where evidence of mismanagement will be quickly noted. He said the real owners of large industries do not exercise control, but leave it to others.

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ASK UNIONISTS' AID

Chicago, Ill., Jan. 23.—Trade unions are receiving copies of State Insurance Superintendent Potts' report to Gov. Dunne on "Investigation of Fire Insurance Conditions and Rates in Illinois." With the report is a circular which calls attention to the organization with the Cigarmakers' International union, the terms of unity having been entered into last month ago at a Cleveland, Ohio, conference. Both organizations will vote on the question, next March.

TO BUILD ALASKA RAILROAD.

Washington, Jan. 23.—Actual construction of the government railroad to connect the Alaskan coal fields with the coast, authorized by Congress last March, will begin during the coming spring, according to federal authorities. Under the law providing for the construction of the railroad the president is empowered to locate the route, on whether railroads already constructed shall be purchased as part of the line, and other details.

STRIKERS ARE FIRM.

Gloversville, N. Y., Jan. 23.—Striking glove cutters and the makers of Adkinett firm in their demand for increased wages, despite every effort of employers to divide the ranks. As a part of this program an Albany newspaper, last week, printed a long story wherein was alleged a decision of the strikers to return to work. The strikers have answered this story in an emphatic manner, and are urging their sympathizers to be aware of these attempts to divide their ranks.

RESIST PIECE WORK PLAN.

Seattle, Jan. 23.—Members of Ladies' Garment Workers' Local Union, 25 are entering the third month of their strike against the Matsen Manufacturing company, which insists on establishing the piece work system. The workers are maintaining an effective fight, and as a last resort the manager has appealed to the state courts for an injunction.

AGAINST CONVICT LABOR.

Washington, Jan. 22.—While the Senate was discussing the District of Columbia appropriation bill, Senator Kern, of Indiana, presented a petition of the settlement prohibiting the sale of brick manufactured at the District workhouse "in competition with the products of free labor, or otherwise to any department or institution of the government of the District of Columbia, the United States, or to any public or private corporation, partnership, person or persons."

DEFENDS TRADE UNIONS.

Philadelphia, Jan. 23.—Trade unions have no desire to destroy the "temple of labor" and perish in its ruins, said Dr. J. Byrne, of Pittsburgh, in his defense of trade unions before a meeting of the Catholic Social Science Club of this state. The speaker defended the unions, whom, he said, were proceeding along rational lines.

MORE CO-OP. STORES.

Chicago, Jan. 23.—Two new co-operative stores have been established in this city. The union miners of Cedar Point have started a co-operative store with $1,000 capital. It is stated that the business of this venture already amounts to over $70 a day.

THEATERS SIGN AGREEMENT.

Quincy, Ill., Jan. 23.—Every theater in this city but one have signed agreements with the Musicians' Protective union.

TALKS UNITY TO STOGIE MAKERS

Wheeling, W. Va., Jan. 22.—Last Sunday an audience that filled Duer Court theater tendered enthusiastic greetings to President Gompers and Secretary Tracy of the A. F. of L. Union Label Trades department. The meeting was arranged by the Ohio Valley Trades and Labor Assembly. President Gompers paid his respects to former Judge Jackson and Judge Dayton, in connection with injunction judges, whose records are unique in West Virginia courts. The speaker recalled the condition of miners in 1897, when it became necessary to solicit funds for the relief of starving miners themselves were working, their wages being insufficient to feed those dependent on them. Later he drew comparisons used by President Gompers in illustrating advance made by workers through organization. After the meeting a dinner was given in honor of the visitors by the organizers in charge of the meeting. In the evening President Gompers and Secretary Tracy addressed a meeting of the Stogie Makers' league, and urged the members of that union to vote in favor of amalgamating with the organization with the Cigarmakers' International union, the terms of unity having been entered into last month ago at a Cleveland, Ohio, conference. Both organizations will vote on the question, next March.

DANGERS ON GREAT LAKES

Washington, Jan. 23.—The excursion and passenger boat interests on the Great Lakes are among the strongest opponents of the seamen's bill, now pending in the United States Senate.

Last week a memorial was presented from the Michigan legislature against the seamen's bill, in which it was stated that proposed laws against Great Lakes shipping was unnecessary, as "steamers are passing and repassing each other at very short intervals, so that assistance is always near at hand in the case of any accident."

In answer to this claim, Senator La Follette had inserted in the records last year's report of the local inspection authorities on "Lake Boat Excursion Dangers," which stated:

"It was found that the boats only carried lifeboats and life-rafts to save the lives of 30 per cent of their passengers. In other words, that a boat licensed to a capacity of 2,000 to 3,000 passengers during the season next April or May 1st or October 15—would be able to provide liferafts for less than one-third of the boat if the boat was crowded to its capacity. These boats are crowded to the rail on holidays and week-ends, when life preservers are plentiful, but life preservers are not adequate protection for small children. The report also recommends that there is amended national legislation to compel excursion boats to increase their lifeboat equipment, personal safety on an overcrowded Lake Michigan excursion boat is a risk in which happiness must depend upon fate as to whether it would be numbered among the worthiest saved' or the two-thirds that would be dependent upon life preservers. Among the latter would doubtless be many children with only a circle of cork around them to float their frightened souls to rescue."

HOLLAND TRADE UNIONIST TELLS STORY OF BELGIUM'S MISERY BECAUSE OF WAR

Washington, Jan. 23.—At the last meeting of the A. F. of L. executive council it was ordered that the following appeal be printed in the American Federationist and the A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter:

"NEDERLANDSCH VERBOND VAN VAKVEREENIGINGEN.

"(Dutch Federation of Trade Unions).

"Headoffice. Regulierszracht 80, Amsterdam.

"Amsterdam, December, 1914.

"To Trade Union National Centers:

"Dear Sirs and Brothers: It is more than four months now since the Belgian people were, against their own will, forced to take part in this war which has set aflame the larger part of Europe. For more than four months this war, with all its horrors, has completely paralyzed the industrial life of that little country, plunging the whole population and especially the working classes into the most pitiful misery.

"It will scarcely be necessary to explain to you in detail the general conditions prevailing in a country so ravaged by the war. You have, no doubt, learned all this from the daily press of your own country.

"It appears necessary, however, to call your attention to the consequences this war has had for the Belgian laboring classes.

"Work had been stopped in all factories and workshops the first day hostilities commenced, condemning the employees who were not called upon to defend their country to the terrible consequences of complete unemployment.

"One part of the country after the other has been conquered by the German troops. Wherever battles and other military engagements took place, the inhabitants had to leave their dwellings fleeing to some other city or to some other part of the country, abandoning all they had. They might soon be compelled to flee anew to some new place of refuge.

"It will be easily understood that under such conditions unemployment has developed to such an extent that the trade unions are powerless and unable to effectively fight the miseries accruing therefrom.

"Everything possible is being done and done by all public boards where the workers are represented, with a view of providing for the maintenance of this unhappy, semi-starved population. Food has been distributed on a very modest scale and, once in a while, money as well.

"All this, however, is in no way sufficient to keep the workers, their wives and children alive. Extreme misery prevails all round and this threatens to become more acute with the approaching winter.

"The Belgian trade unions have used every possible means to save their organizations from complete destruction and to support their members during these tragic moments, but there is a limit to everything and the means at the disposal of the Belgian trade unions are entirely exhausted.

"The National Centre of the Trade Unions of Holland (the Nederlandsch Verbond van Vakvereenigingen), after thorough examination of this sad state of affairs, has decided to issue an urgent appeal for help on behalf of the Belgian fellow-workers. We have been communicating with the management of the International Federation of Trade Unions (Secretariat Carl Legien, Berlin), whom we informed of our intention. Whereupon we received his immediate reply was that he had taken notice of our plan.

"We now approach your organization, dear sirs and brothers, praying that you might render whatever help you can give to the Belgian unions who at the present moment are undergoing the most serious and sinister trial.

"Will you kindly take cognizance of the fact that our Belgian friends have been brought to these trist conditions without any fault of their own and we are convinced that you will do everything within your power to render practical help to the Belgian working class which desires nothing else but to be permitted to continue the struggle for the improvement of their economic conditions and their struggle for social liberation.

"Will you kindly forward your contributions as early as possible to the above address, to be sent to the Belgian trade union centre from here. Let us express our sincere thanks in advance for all you can do.

"Awaiting your early reply, we beg to remain,

"Yours fraternally,

"J. OUDEGEEST, President.

"On behalf of the Dutch Trade Union Centre."

FAVOR COMPENSATION LAW

Jefferson City, Mo., Jan. 23.—In its favorable report on the question of workmen's compensation to the state senate, a committee appointed by that body exempts from the proposed law's operation domestic servants, farm laborer and employment of three or less employes. The commission says:

"The social principle upon which laws compensation) are founded is that industry should bear its burden of its accidents and distribute the cost upon the consumers of its products, as it does other cost items. One of the principles basic upon which this proposition is, that modern industry is so well organized that there is little or no casualty, intelligently and universally done. It therefore follows that a casualty, intelligently and universally distribute this cost."

The commission shows by figures that a compensation law not only has humane qualities, but it possesses merit as a tax-saver. In Ohio, Wisconsin and Massachusetts are used to illustrate this point. It is stated that in Ohio where there were 84,623 accidents in one year covered by compensation law, and only forty of these were fatal. The commission makes this comment:

"On the basis of 50,000 accidents a year in Missouri, only sixteen would get into the courts, whereas now such cases constitute more than 10 per cent of all judicial business."

Opposition to a compensation law is assured. Meetings have been held between Kansas City and St. Louis business men for the purpose of making plans to fight the proposal. The familiar claim is made that the law would put "an unreasonable burden on industry."

FAVOR NEW WAGE LAW.

Sacramento, Cal., Jan. 23.—A law providing for the collection of wage claims has been introduced in the state legislature by Assemblyman Hall, but one recently declared unconstitutional. The bill is favored by the state labor commissioner and provides that wages shall have to be collected to $100. No costs shall be charged to the plaintiff. No attorney shall be allowed to represent either party to the suit and no postponement can be granted by the court unless agreeable to all parties interested. The only grounds for an appeal will be that of fraud, misrepresentation by the court or misconduct by either party. In case the judgment is not paid promptly, property of the defendant may be attached. The bill makes it impossible to resort to technicalities and recovery is possible within two days after the claim is filed.

A STRIKE NO CONSPIRACY.

New York, Jan. 23.—A strike is not a conspiracy, declared Judge Gibbs, of the Bronx County court, in discharging five strikers who were arrested on complaint of a paving contractor, whose workers struck because of a violation of union rules. Failing to employ non-unionists, the contractor secured a grand jury indictment against the strikers. Their attorney raised a question of law on the charge of conspiracy.

In dismissing the strikers, the court said: "Labor unions have a legitimate and use every legal means to protect its own interests, raise wages, shorten hours, and enforce demands. Labor has also the same right to protect itself against outside competition that business has. To decide competition that business has. To decide that a legitimate strike called by a legitimate union and there was no criminal conspiracy."

MINERS PLEDGE SUPPORT.

Columbus, O., Jan. 23.—Continued support to striking miners in eastern Ohio was pledged by the Ohio State Federation of Labor. The legislature and state officials are called upon to investigate repeated charges that the Pennsylvania freight rates for hauling coal exist. It is claimed that coal is carried through Pennsylvania points to Kentucky than from Ohio mines. The convention also declared against any change in the state compensation law at this time.

WORKERS WILL ACT TOGETHER.

Springfield, Ill., Jan. 22.—For the purpose of urging the passage of various labor measures by the state legislature, a joint legislative board, composed of the following organizations, has been formed: Illinois State Federation of Labor, Chicago Federation of Labor, United Mine Workers of America, each of the four railway brotherhoods, Chicago Federation of Teachers and the State Teachers' Association. It is believed that the farmers will be represented on the board.

STATE HAS SAFETY EXPERT

Columbus, O., Jan. 21.—Ohio's first annual industrial safety exposition, held in this city last week, was a success and a revelation. The exposition was arranged and conducted by the state industrial commission, the executive body that is carrying into effect the provisions of the workmen's compensation law and other statutes relating to industry. A large hall was secured, and all manner of safety devices were arranged in booths. Attendants demonstrated the utility of each device. Safety-first companies, large steel concerns, and other Ohio industrial corporations were represented, while other state and federal boards. The most important feature of the exposition was the "round table" discussions, at which representatives of the corporations and representatives of organized labor discussed safety methods in use and employe and suggested measures to meet the problems presented. President Voll and Secretary Tracy, of the Ohio State Federation of Labor, took a leading part in the debates. If even one-half of the benefits claimed to have been instituted by the companies is a fact, these companies have revolutionized their methods in dealing with employes since the organized workmen of this state secured the enactment of the workmen's compensation law. The Ohio Manufacturers' association, at its last convention, commended the law for the harmony with the labor unions in making the compensation law effective. The attitude of this organization resisted the adoption of the law.

A WARLIKE SOLON.

Denver, Col., Jan. 22.—The Hon. Alphonse P. Ardourel, member of the state legislature, is the latest to offer a remedy against strikes, according to the United Labor Bulletin, this warlike solon will include strikes in the list of things treasonable. The penalty will be death. Mr. Ardourel has it all figured out. At the present time there is no penalty for resisting armed cossacks or private armies in the pay of corporations. By defining this as "rebellion," and making Colorado the first state in the Union to provide a penalty for treason against the state, the legislature is confident that agitators will disappear and this commonwealth will become the proverbial land of milk and honey.

TO EDUCATE HOUSEWIVES.

New York, Jan. 22.—As part of their campaign to reduce the cost of living, the Women's Trade Union League announce they will open a general meeting place in this city for members, and classes will be formed. There will be a staff of domestic science teachers. Moving pictures will be shown to demonstrate proper and improper cooking methods and sanitary and insanitary methods employed by dealers. There will be lectures on poultry, fish, marketing and all things pertaining to household matters.

WILL URGE LABOR LAWS.

Montgomery, Ala., Jan. 23.—Organized labor in this state will urge the following laws before the Alabama legislature: A compulsory education bill, mechanics' lien law, taking convicts from the mines and putting them on the public roads work, a compensation law, strengthening the mining and child labor laws, and provision for a state constitutional convention.

BENEFITS FOR DISABLED.

San Francisco, Jan. 21.—Unionists in this state have prepared an elaborate legislative campaign, which includes the following: Workmen's law, anti-injunction law, removal of property qualifications for jurors, jury trials in cases of contempt of court in labor disputes, amendments to the workmen's compensation act, regulating private detective agencies, a state publicity constitutional amendment limiting the power of courts to declare laws unconstitutional, appropriations to extend university education and the question of unemployment.

STRIKE DANGER IS OVER.

Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Jan. 23.—Organized street carmen of this city have won their point against the local traction company, which for months refused to arbitrate differences between them to arbitration. The main contention was the workers' demand for the abolition of the "spread" system. The company refused, on the ground that "it was interfering with their right to run their own business." The question of wages was another factor that made a settlement seem almost impossible until the federal mediators offered their assistance. As a result both parties to the controversy have signed an agreement by which they announce that a satisfactory discipline clause has been agreed upon, and the question of wages, by mutual consent, has been left to arbitration.

POETIC JUSTICE.

Washington, Jan. 23.—The Senate has confirmed Frederick L. Siddons as judge of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia. Judge Siddons was a member of the law firm that defended Messrs. Gompers, Mitchell and Morrison in the contempt proceedings caused by the sentencing to jail of these three unionists by Judge Wright. Later, Judge Wright resigned while charges against him were being investigated by the senate committee on the judiciary, and now, with a justice that is poetic, Mr. Siddons succeeds him.

OPPOSE FEMALE LABOR LAW.

Philadelphia, Pa., Jan. 22.—Members of the Pennsylvania Hotel association spoke against those provisions of the female labor law which affect hotel business. The proprietors insisted that many of their women employes were of the same opinion, because "a hotel is purely democratic," and cannot be compared with business work. The law also seemed to indicate that working in a hotel is one continuous joy.

WILL COMBAT "ABSURDITIES."

Harrisburg, Pa., Jan. 22.—The Pennsylvania Manufacturers' association has opened headquarters in this city and is preparing to combat the passage of workmen's compensation law, child labor law and other enactments that will prove "inimical to industry." An officer of the association says manufacturers are prepared to oppose the "usual crop of absurdities."

MAKE STEADY PROGRESS.

San Diego, Cal., Jan. 22.—The Cooks, Waiters and Waitresses' union has secured another agreement, and the persistent agitation of this organization is bringing results.

WAGES REDUCED BY JUDGE

Sydney, New South Wales, Jan. 23.—Justice Heydon, of the court of industrial arbitration, has suspended wage increases recently awarded railroad workers, and trade unionists now declare: "Wage boards which kept wages down in prosperous times, ought to be able to keep them up when times are bad."

The application for a suspension of rates was made by the chief commissioner for railways and tramways as a result of a basic principle previously made by Justice Heydon that this could be done because of present industrial conditions. The interested unions were represented by a strong corps of attorneys, who entered vigorous protest against the proposal and who declared that the dangers had prevailed throughout the country, and not the European war, was responsible for depressions. The unions' attorneys insisted that another factor was the possibility that railroads were constructed or being constructed in places where they were not paying, and that if decreases were to be made in connection with the development of the country, the men should not be called upon to bear the loss.

The court refused to accept this viewpoint, and said he could not be called upon to criticise the government for its policy of building railroads.

After the court listened to arguments by attorneys representing the workers, the railroads and the government's railroad department, the request for a suspension was complied with.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS "TOO BUSY."

Sydney, New South Wales, Jan. 23.—Working men in this city have been notified by Acting Premier Cann that public officials are "too busy" to receive a deputation of laborers who would urge the adoption of resolutions passed intended to relieve unemployment.

Among the suggestions were an amended income tax act exempting 6 per cent on all incomes to $750 per annum; a reduction of salaries of certain public officials; a law for the building railroads by the Federal government; a grant to the States of sums of money to start public works, an act to limit charges of rents.

A committee appointed by the meeting to present these resolutions was also notified the ministers could not see them. A resolution to call "a special conference of labor" to discuss the matter further" was lost and the secretary was instructed to again attempt to secure the premier's consent to receive the deputation.

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WORKERS MAKE POLITICAL GAIN.

Adelaide, South Australia, Jan. 23.—After a vigorous municipal campaign, the workers in this city have succeeded in electing two councilors out of the four labor candidates who contested. This gives the workers one more voice in the city's management. The main feature of the municipality's platform is: Land values assessment; abolition of plural voting; public ownership of railways, tramways, harbors, docks, etc.; union wage rates for municipal work; day labor principle for all municipal work; all things being equal, preference to union labor; a system of town planning; council meetings to be held in the evenings.

MINERS ADOPT NEW PLAN.

Lansford, Pa., Jan. 22.—Officers of the United Mine Workers' union have been notified by state mining officials that they have appointed a committee of mine inspectors to investigate a colliery at Lansford, the scene of the explosion which is owned by the Lehigh Coal and Navigation company. Seven men lost their lives in the explosion, and the verdict of the coroners' juries in each case was that the cause of death was unknown. The miners, however, assert as is necessary evidence to say that enough air shall be circulated in mines so as to render harmless a fire or any noxious or dangerous gases. The workers claim that when accidents occur owing to the fire damp, it might who, or what, was responsible for the ignition, but never a word why the company failed to see to it that there was no defiance of law. The miners are determined that henceforth causes shall be discussed, instead of effects.

SAFETY DEVICES INCREASE.

Youngstown, Ohio, Jan. 22. — A committee appointed by the United Labor Congress has investigated the progress made by a large steel mill in providing safety devices reports that it only can commend the results secured by the mill management. Safety devices of the most modern type have been installed and a praiseworthy effort made to conserve human life and health. While the committee did not present detailed statistics, in a minor way criticism was offered against the system of physical examinations. It was asserted that while these examinations only had resulted in workmen being shifted from one job to the mill to prevent that the health of defectives may be better preserved, a fear was expressed that the physical examinations might grow into abuses, with discrimination and victimization the chief features.

COURT CAN'T DEFINE "MINING."

Hazelton, Pa., Jan. 23.—The miners have been defeated in their efforts to make effective the state mine certificate law through Judge McCarrell's refusal to restrain state mine officials from pursuing their present course of issuing certificates to miners other than practical miners. The miners insist that the law intended that a man shall dig coal before he is qualified as a miner and can secure a foreman's certificate. The court holds that the legislature has failed to define the term "mining." As a result of this decision, the miners say a man who has been qualified by loading or handling dynamite may receive a certificate as a practical miner, which is very important to the workers' lives. The decision will be appealed.

CALIFORNIA UNIONISTS ALERT.

Sacramento, Cal., Jan. 23.—Unionists of this state have prepared an elaborate legislative campaign, which includes the following: Workmen's law, anti-injunction law, removal of property qualifications for jurors, jury trials in cases of contempt of court in labor disputes, amendments to the workmen's compensation act, regulating private detective agencies, a state publicity constitutional amendment limiting the power of courts to declare laws unconstitutional, appropriations to extend university education and the question of unemployment.

DEATHS IN MINES DECREASE.

Harrisburg, Pa., Jan. 21.—There was a reduction in the number of fatal mine accidents in the mines of this state last year, according to statistics of the state mining officials. In the anthracite region the number in 1913 was 626; in 1914 it was 511. The number in the bituminous region in 1913 was 511; in 1914 it was 461.

BREWERY WORKERS ORGANIZE.

New Braunfels, Tex., Jan. 23.—Brewery workers in this city have organized. It is stated that employers will sign an agreement to recognize the union and bring conditions in the near future.

HATTERS' CASE DISCUSSED

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL STATES POSITION OF A. F. OF L.

No Authority or Power to Pay Judgment.

A. F. of L. Fulfilled Obligations by Assuming Legal Defense Before the Courts and Securing Enactment of Clayton Law and Making Similar Suits Impossible.

Washington, Jan. 22.—At the meeting of the American Federation of Labor Executive Council, held in this city, much time was devoted to a consideration of the judgment of the United States Supreme court against the Danbury, Conn., hatters and the latter's action. Officers of the Hatters' union were heard and consultations had with attorneys for the A. F. of L. who conducted the case, while consideration was given various suggestions by unionists regarding the matter.

The conclusion reached is as follows:

The executive council, while feeling that a great injustice has been done the hatters, finds that, despite that feeling, that the American Federation of Labor has no authority or power to pay the award or the damages, in whole or in part to which the judgment by the Loewe company against the hatters; later, when the United Hatters of North America of which they are a part, to bear the expense of defending the case in the courts up to and including the decision of the supreme court of the land, the American Federation of Labor pledged itself to financially aid in the legal proceedings. This pledge was fulfilled. The resolution adopted by the Denver convention, in 1906, in the A. F. of L. was fully performed. The American Federation of Labor, by its activities, growing out of the pledge made at Denver, in the hatters' case, has secured the enactment of the labor provisions of the Clayton anti-trust law, October 15, 1914. This law precludes the possibility of any similar suit being brought in the federal courts for the exercise of any normal action as was performed by the hatters, when such activities may be performed within the confinement of the law, and thus the Federation has performed its full duties to the hatters and to all labor in the premises."

COAL BARONS RETRACT.

Denver, Jan. 21.—President Lincoln's statement that the people can't be fooled all the time, was recalled by the action of the Colorado Fuel and Iron company in publicly retracting former declarations regarding recognition of the United Mine Workers union.

The retraction, stated, several months ago, that these moneys covered a period of nine weeks. When President Welborn of the company's Industrial Relations commission, he was compelled to acknowledge the statements were untrue. Welborn, it is said, has "lost caste" bulletin, which states that the moneys deposited by Governor Frank Hayes, Mother Jones, and others were for a year instead of nine weeks.

Having the operators' disregard for state laws, which caused all the trouble in Colorado, unionists are seeking legislation which will prevent a repetition of such horn means.

The company can succeed permanently which does not deserve and receive the confidence of both its own employes and the public. The only basis for the settlement of the Colorado Fuel and Iron company to command this confidence."

HOUSING INSPECTIONS LAX.

Boston, Jan. 21.—Lax housing inspection in most cities was the charge made by Secretary Lawrence Veiller, of the National Housing association, in an address in this city.

"You can count on the fingers of one hand," he said, "the cities of this country which have a proper method of house inspection. Most of the buildings that are condemned are those which are a menace to the public through their very existence, and which are therefore always liable to be condemned. The real problem with the purpose of ferreting out infractions of the law on their own initiative. Most of the worst tenements are sitting back in their chairs waiting for complaints to be made."

The speaker said the support of courts was necessary, but too often judges were prejudiced in favor of the landlords, and "fail to see the important social consequences beyond certain offenses."

60-HOUR LAW INEFFECTIVE.

Charleston, S. C., Jan. 23.—In an address to the Central Labor union, Commissioner Watson, of the state department of agriculture, commerce and industries, on behalf the delegates how mill-owners and other manufacturers have made the present 60-hour law worthless by taking advantage of the provision which permits extension of two hours per day when the mill is shut down for lost. The state official urged that the law be tightened. He said it was time to put an end to the "evening wedge" for a workmen's compensation law.

PAINTERS WANT MORE.

Pittsfield, Mass., Jan. 23.—The organized painters of this city have notified employers that a new wage scale will become effective starting April 1. The present day and 50 cents an hour will be the rule.

ONE SCHOOL SYSTEM URGED

Chicago, Jan. 22.—In a circular just issued by officers of the Illinois State Federation of Labor it is stated that:

"The time has come when the state must look to the safety of our public school system. A systematic study of the public schools of Illinois was made under the direction of Edwin G. Cooley, the superintendent of the public schools of the city of Chicago, with the purpose of inducing the state legislature to establish a system of industrial education. Our industrial training district from the schools which aim to fit boys and girls for industrial life, but schools cannot, in the very nature of things, develop the powers and faculties which will enable the workers to act in the way best calculated to secure for themselves the highest degree of freedom. All children, the men and women of tomorrow, should be educated in the principles of democracy and democratic citizenship, not simply trained for the benefit of municipal employers.

"The circular calls attention to resolutions adopted by the State Federation of Labor conventions, which the dual form of administration is carried on as a separate system for the training of workers in agriculture, and which is termed a scheme to relieve the congestion of the cities, and to keep the country boys and girls on the farms.

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